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**U.S. Environmental Protection Agency - Region 2**New Jersey, New York, Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands  
290 Broadway - New York, New York 10007-1866[www.epa.gov/region2](http://www.epa.gov/region2)**Contact: Mary Mears 212-637-3669****EPA AND CITY OUTLINE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN  
TO ADDRESS THE CONCERNS OF LOWER MANHATTAN RESIDENTS  
ABOUT THE IMPACTS OF THE WORLD TRADE CENTER COLLAPSE  
ON INDOOR AIR QUALITY****FOR RELEASE:**

(#02038) New York, New York – The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and its federal, state and city partners today announced a comprehensive plan to ensure that apartments impacted by the collapse of the World Trade Center have been properly cleaned. The plan – covering residential units south of Canal Street and the Manhattan Bridge approach, river to river – was developed by the multi-agency Task Force on Indoor Air in Lower Manhattan created by EPA Administrator Christie Whitman. All levels of government have come together in this unprecedented effort to provide assurances that people are not being exposed to pollutants related to the World Trade Center collapse at levels that might pose long-term health risks.

EPA, New York City, the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) are taking a collaborative approach that will include the:

- cleanups of residential units on request, using certified contractors, with followup testing for asbestos in the indoor air;
- testing-only for asbestos in the indoor air for requesting households;
- establishment of a hotline to take cleanup and testing requests;
- availability of HEPA (High Efficiency Particulate Air) filter vacuums;
- distribution of health and cleanup information; and
- professional cleanups of remaining unoccupied, uncleaned buildings.

"We understand the concerns of Lower Manhattan residents and we know that they are looking to us for reassurance," said Jane M. Kenny, EPA Regional Administrator. "While we cannot undo the events of September 11, we can provide the assurance that people's homes have been cleaned properly. While the scientific data about any immediate health risks from indoor air is reassuring, people should not have to live with uncertainty about their futures."

"As New Yorkers rebound from 9/11, Mayor Bloomberg is committed to ensuring that the health and safety of residents and workers is of the highest priority," said Christopher Ward, DEP Commissioner. "While earlier air testing in Downtown Manhattan reassured New Yorkers, this

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comprehensive, collaborative program will allow residents to have their apartments cleaned and tested free of charge if there is any concern with indoor air quality. New Yorkers deserve to know that their environment is safe from health risks."

Under the plan outlined today, FEMA will provide a grant to New York City that will pay for the professional cleaning and testing.

"FEMA strongly supports the EPA and New York City's efforts to take immediate action aimed at alleviating concerns over environmental conditions in Lower Manhattan," said Joseph F. Picoiano, Acting Regional Director of the FEMA Region, "We are pleased to be able to fully fund this initiative."

Under the plan outlined today, FEMA will provide funds to hire certified cleanup contractors for residents who wish to have their homes professionally cleaned. EPA will conduct followup testing for asbestos in the indoor air after the cleanups are completed. Upon request, the Agency will provide the option of testing-only for residents who do not want their apartments cleaned. New York City will provide HEPA vacuums to residents who wish to do their own cleaning on an ongoing basis. Requests for testing or cleaning will be taken through an EPA hotline that will be set up within several weeks.

EPA will collect samples of some pollutants associated with the collapse of the World Trade Center in apartments that have not been impacted. The Agency will use the data to determine pre-existing or "background" levels in interior spaces in New York City. The Agency is also preparing to test various cleanup techniques in a still-unoccupied building near the World Trade Center site to confirm their effectiveness. EPA will provide health and cleanup information to all residents through the hotline and on the Agency Web site ([www.epa.gov/wtc](http://www.epa.gov/wtc)).

Also under today's plan, the New York City Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) will supervise the cleaning of a small group of heavily impacted buildings that have remained unoccupied since September 11. Some of these buildings have not been cleaned thoroughly; most have not been cleaned at all. Worker safety during this cleanup will be coordinated with OSHA. In addition, DEP has begun contacting building owners to initiate the cleanup of residual debris on rooftops and building facades in Lower Manhattan. Finally, the city is developing a database of the results of samples taken indoors and outdoors by federal, state and local agencies as well as building owners and contractors.

"This is a huge task," added Ms. Kenny, "But I can assure you that we will not consider our job complete until residents and the business community of Lower Manhattan have regained a sense of comfort in the place that they call home."

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